

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0846

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJECT: AFTERMATH OF MISIONES ELECTIONS

1. SUMMARY. IN ADDITION TO MIGUEL ALTERACH, WHO WON THE GOVERNORSHIP, POLITICAL OBSERVERS HAVE IDENTIFIED SEVERAL OTHER WINNERS IN THE APRIL 13 MISIONES ELECTIONS AS WELL AS SOME LOSERS. THE PERONIST VICTORY IN THE PROVINCE IS DESCRIBED AS HAVING FORTIFIED THE POSITION OF THE FREJULI, THE POLITICAL WING OF THE PERONIST PARTY, MRS. PERON AND THE RADICAL PARTY. THE LOSERS ARE THE MINOR PARTIES IN GENERAL AND THE DISSIDENT PERONISTS IN PARTICULAR. END SUMMARY.

2. THE MINOR PARTIES DID NOT FARE WELL IN THE ELECTIONS. IN MARCH 1973, THE TWO MAJOR GROUPS, FREJULI AND UCR, WON 64 PERCENT OF THE VOTE IN THE PROVINCE. THIS TIME THE TWO FINISHED WITH 85 PERCENT. WITH ANOTHER 9 PERCENT GOING TO DISSIDENT PERONISTS, THE MINOR PARTIES WERE LEFT WITH ONLY 6 PERCENT TO DIVIDE AMONG THEMSELVES. PERHAPS IN VIEW OF THIS DISMAL SHOWING, SERIOUS CONSIDERATION IS REPORTEDLY NOW BEING GIVEN TO A REVISION OF THE ELECTORAL LAW WHICH PROVIDES FOR PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION. THE MINOR PARTIES FEAR A REVISION WHICH WOULD PREJUDICE THEIR ELECTORAL POSSIBILITIES. SUCH A MODIFICATION IS A GOOD POSSIBILITY, THOUGH THE FORM

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IT WILL TAKE IS NOT YET KNOWN. IN ANY EVENT, AS A RESULT OF

THE ELECTION THERE IS CONSIDERABLE SPECULATION REGARDING  
MOVEMENT IN THE DIRECTION OF A TWO-PARTY DEMOCRACY.

3. THE "WINNERS" WERE THOSE WHO FOUND EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT  
THEIR POSITIONS IN THE RETURNS. MRS. PERON HAD FOR THE FIRST  
TIME A CLEAR INDICATION (VALID OR NOT) THAT SHE HAD INHERITED  
NOT ONLY THE OFFICE BUT THE MASS FOLLOWING OF HER LATE  
HUSBAND. FREJULI WAS ENCOURAGED BY ITS VICTORY AND THE POOR  
SHOWING OF THOSE WHO BOLTED THE FRONT. THE UCR AND BALBIN  
IN PARTICULAR WERE ENCOURAGED BY THE RESULTS AND EMERGED THE  
UNDISPUTED (AND THE ONLY) MAJOR OPPOSITION PARTY. THE POLITICAL  
WING OF PERONISM WAS ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE ITS STRENGTH AS  
THE ALMOST TOTAL ABSENCE OF ORGANIZED INDUSTRIAL WORKERS  
PRECLUDED THE LABOR WING OF THE MOVEMENT FROM CONTRIBUTING  
VERY MUCH TO THE VICTORY.

4. COMMENT. DESPITE THE PERONIST VICTORY, THE ISSUE OF THE  
LAST MINUTE "SUBSIDIES" HAS TARNISHED THE IMAGE CONSIDERABLY,  
ESPECIALLY THE PREMISE THAT THE RESULTS VINDICATE MRS. PERON'S  
ROLE AND HER GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES. ONE STORY CURRENTLY IN  
CIRCULATION IS THAT CERTIFICATES WERE DISTRIBUTED GRANTING  
THE BEARER A FREE REFRIGERATOR OR WASHING MACHINE BUT ONLY  
IN THE EVENT OF A PERONIST VICTORY. THE STORY ALSO ADDS  
THAT THE CERTIFICATES WERE HANDED OUT IN MANY RURAL AREAS  
WHERE THERE IS NO ELECTRICITY.

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